

Chairman's AGM report re 2020~2021

It has certainly been a very different twelve months in relation to parish matters, much influenced by the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Parish Councillors have learned to successfully conduct the monthly meetings via Zoom, although very few member of the public troubled to attend electronically.

Because of the pressure of his nursing work within the Hospital, Councillor Norman was unable to attend many meetings but contributed where he could. Unfortunately, unforeseen business pressures forced Councillor Letheren to resign from the council in February. Her meticulous contribution to the Working Group and eye for detail will be greatly missed. During the May Parish Council meeting Duncan Hall was co-opted as a replacement councillor.

It has been a year of achievement. The Parish Council has been instrumental in fighting off a very intrusive housing development of inappropriately large houses surrounding and overwhelming 'Inver Lune', which if it had been allowed would have created a precedent for later applications and could have been cited as justification for yet more buildings of a similar nature.

Additionally, very concerned that the proposed Bailrigg Garden Village development will seriously increase vehicular traffic along the A588 and thence through the narrow lanes of the Parish, councillors have been in correspondence with the City Council and their designated architect in order to increase the level of consultation which has been less than adequate so far.

Councillor Parrett and her working group are due great praise for delivering the very complex and time-consuming Neighbourhood Plan and Design Codes documents. An even greater achievement when compared with other Parish Councils, who have found the task too onerous and have failed to complete their own Neighbourhood Plans. It must also be pointed out that AWSPC's Neighbourhood Plan and Design Codes surveys have been very well responded to with 93 forms returned, representing 109 parishioners from 68 properties.

Most importantly, many parishioners took the trouble to praise the Parish Council and Working Group for their hard work. There were almost no negative responses.

Another great success was the draining of the deep and persistent flooding along the Snuff Mill Lane track bordering the Water Treatment Works. Despite many delays, United Utilities were finally persuaded to donate sufficient funds for the Parish Council to employ a contractor to dig a ditch to bypass the blocked culvert within United Utilities' perimeter. In addition, a considerable length of the Snuff Mill Lane track was levelled, the mud removed, and then resurfaced with new chippings, much improving access for walkers and cyclists.

The Council continues to liaise with City and County Councillors, two local farmers and the foreshore Wildfowlers in order to bring about a resolution of the regular tidal flooding of 'Long Mile Lane' ...a work in progress.

Nick Webster